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SOURCE Gudok.

SOVIET RAILROADS TO PREPARE FOR WINTER

Numbers in parentheses refer to the appended list of sources.

Several recent reports in the Russian railroad newspaper Gudok discuss problems of winter preparations for the Soviet railroads. Although these items by no means cover all aspects of the subject nor all areas, they do shed some light on the difficulties encountered and the countermeasures to be taken.

### Responsibility

The Main Traffic Administration of the Ministry of Transportation is responsible for the winterizing efforts of the railroads. At a meeting of the Collegium of the Ministry in the beginning of October the stations department of this administration was severely criticized for its failure to promote better winterizing operations by the stations (1).

### Weather

In 1949-50 winter came early. In the Petropavlovsk area the temperature went down to 13 degrees below zero centigrade and brought snowstorms before the end of October (2). A strong snowstorm covering the entire territory of the ~~Trans-Baikal~~ Trans-Siberian Railroad System was reported in early November (3).

Descriptive Measurement

Some preventive measures to be initiated are:

1. Establishment of inspection points for railroad equipment and insurance that these points are fully staffed (1).

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2. Early organization of snow-removal operations, with emphasis on availability of locomotives for snow ploughs and a sufficient number of snow-removal trains (3).

3. Switches to be repaired (4). Capital and medium repairs of freight and passenger cars (1).

4. Locomotives to be prepared for winter. An example is the Kandalaksha Electric Locomotive Depot, where the following measures were taken:

a. New machines were built for the manufacture of the complex units of the locomotives which most often fail during winter operations.

b. A device for fastening the gear transmission cover was invented.

c. Alongside the depot a sheltered inspection pit was built for inspecting the locomotives without having to take them into the heated depot, where moisture from melting ice and snow might get into the insulation and cause damage to the motors.

d. To avoid letting snow into the motors through the air intakes, cylinders with baffles (labyrinths) built inside were welded to all motor air-intake openings, and all new motors received by the depot were equipped in this fashion.

e. To prevent snow from getting into the motors at the connections of the ventilating tubes with the traction motors, felt stuffing was put between the flanges.

f. All locomotives of the depot will be equipped with spare pantograph collecting shoes made in the depot. On the collecting shoes two iron strips are fastened between the outside copper plates so that in extreme cold, when there is much spalling, the copper parts of the collecting shoes will not fuse (5).

5. Stockpiling of the necessary fuel to heat station buildings (1).

#### Delays and Failures

In practice many of these preventive measures were not carried out, or only insufficiently carried out, for a variety of reasons.

Winterizing preparations were to have been completed by 1 October. However, many measures were not completed by that time. Delay of preparations was especially great on the systems of the Donets, Central Asia, and Volga railroad okrugs. There was a shortage of labor on the Kuybyshev, Omsk, Yaroslavl', and other systems. Some inspection crews were understaffed. On the East Siberian, Tomsk, Kuybyshev, and Turkestan-Siberian systems only one third of the necessary fuel to heat station buildings had been stockpiled (1).

Station tracks on the Perm' Railroad System were in unsatisfactory condition, and winterizing preparations had just begun in mid-October. On the Kizel Division of the system, particularly on the tracks in the Gubakha, Kizel, Usol'skaya, and Solikamsk stations, trains had to slow down and could not maintain normal speed. At Chusovskaya shunting workers hesitated to use the turnout tracks and did so only at low speed. Only one half of the switch crossovers had been repaired. On 28 September, a rain put the marshalling tracks of the Kizel station knee-deep under water (4).

On the Zlatoust Division of the South Ural Railroad System an inspection commission declared that by mid-October not one electric locomotive was prepared for winter (4).

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There were 43 cases of breakdown in the operations of the Petropavlovsk Division of the Omsk System during the first 20 days of October. Engineers inexperienced in winter driving were sent out while experienced engineers remained at the Petropavlovsk Depot. Locomotives were poorly repaired. Only 48 percent of the freight locomotive park was declared fit for operation in winter conditions. From the beginning of the cold weather until the end of October there had been 200 cases of failure to meet train schedules (2).

Failure to organize snow-removal operations at Tayga Station on the Tomsk Railroad System resulted in hours of delay. During a snowstorm on the night of 12 November not one train ran between Tayga and Mariinsk for a period of 5 hours because efforts to work trains out of drifts blocked the tracks in both directions. On the Kuzel'-Khopkino sector a train stalled in the snow blocked the line for 2 hours. These delays were caused by poor snow-removal organization. Although the snowstorm began at midnight, snow-removal operations were not begun until morning. A snow-removal team was held in Novosibirsk for 24 hours and no locomotive was detailed for the snow plough which was to clear the Bolotnaya-Novosibirsk section. In many stations no effort was made to clear station tracks. Only four snow-removal trains were put to work on the entire Tomsk System (3).

## SOURCES

1. Gudok, No 121, 9 Oct 49
2. Gudok, No 130, 30 Oct 49
3. Gudok, No 136, 13 Nov 49
4. Gudok, No 123, 14 Nov 49
5. Gudok, No 131, 2-Nov 49

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